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DE RUEHAA #0042 0081253
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
P 081253Z JAN 10
FM AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4044
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 6104
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 3794
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 3653
RUEHIT/AMCONSUL ISTANBUL 4346
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RHMCSUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 4278

UNCLAS ASHGABAT 000042

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/CEN; SCA/PPD

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [TINT](#) [SOCI](#) [SCUL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [TX](#)

SUBJECT: CONTINUED INTERNET CENSORSHIP IN TURKMENISTAN

¶1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Not for public Internet.

¶2. (SBU) Turkmentelecom provides the only dial-up and A/DSL internet service in Turkmenistan. It controls and monitors access and reportedly blocks certain sites. Recently, the media reported that YouTube and other sites were added to the list of blocked sites. A quick test revealed that while certain sites are definitely blocked, YouTube and many other mail and social networking sites were still accessible.

A TEST - YOUTUBE IS OK, LIVEJOURNAL IS NOT

3, (SBU) In late December, fergana.ru (a site closely associated with the Turkmen opposition) reported that YouTube, LiveJournal (a free blogging site) and several other sites had been added to the list of sites banned by Turkmen authorities. To test these reports, the PD section conducted an impromptu heuristic analysis of internet access via Turkmentelecom. The PD section used three distinct access points, two from home computers using dial-up and one from a local internet cafe. All three access points allowed access to YouTube, mail.ru and other social networking sites including Facebook and odnoklassniki. Attempts to access LiveJournal, fergana.ru, Gundogar (another opposition web site) from all three access points resulted in an "check your internet connection" response.

¶4. (SBU) COMMENT. Turkmentelecom has reportedly been denying access to Turkmen opposition web sites since the internet was made available to citizens. Given the browser response of "check your connection," it appears that Turkmentelecom simply will not allow users to connect to these known sites. It is unclear if the apparently recent addition of Livejournal to the banned list is an indicator of a pending more wide-spread blocking of blogging sites, or a one-off site blocking. As part of our continued reporting, the Embassy will continue to monitor internet access and site blockages.

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